

**REMARKS**

Entry of the forgoing, prior to an examination on the merits, is respectfully requested.

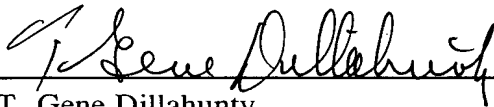
By the present amendment, claims 1-7 have been canceled and claims 9-47 have been added. Thus, claims 8-47 are pending and await consideration on the merits.

Claims 9-47 correspond to claims 1-39 of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/865,826, published as US 2002/0177764 on November 28, 2002. Claims 9-47 are presented herein in order to satisfy 35 U.S.C. 135(b)(2), and in anticipation of a potential Request for Interference to be filed at a later date.

Favorable consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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